

I urge my colleagues to listen to the American people and kill this bill.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Ms. SHEA-PORTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, I am outraged also. I am really outraged at the amount of money that the insurance industry has spent trying to defeat this bill that will help the American people. The companies claim they support health reform, just not this bill. But they have done nothing to reform. They could have taken this time to reform. They still deny coverage for preexisting conditions. They still charge exorbitant rates. They still fight antitrust legislation. They still cancel people's policies when they most need them. And they still limit the payments when people get sick.

They have a secret code word. It's called "start over." What they really mean is defeat it; we don't want it. The question has to be here, whose side are you on? Are you on the side of the insurance companies? Or are you on the side of the American public, the people, the small businesses who have to carry the burden of these fees? Whose side are you really on? I am on the side of middle class Americans, small businesses, and those who are healthy and those who are sick.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. McCOTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. McCOTTER. We live in a very dysfunctional time. We have heard a parade of speakers come to the microphones here in the well of the House and say they stand on the side of the American people. Yet in my 44 years of life, I have never stood on the side of someone who disagrees with me so vehemently.

Overlooking it is a fundamental proposition. The Democratic Party believes that you can take an imperfect health care system and fix it by putting it under the most dysfunctional and broken entity in the United States today. It is called the Federal Government. That proposition is insane. The reality is they do not stand with the American people. They stand for Big Government making decisions in your lives.

We trust the American people, and we will not turn the intimate decisions between you and your doctor over to some Federal bureaucrat. We will leave it in your hands, and we will empower patient-centered wellness and free market reforms if given the chance and a real vote.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. PETRI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, the American people want health reform. They want affordable, reliable care. But after watching the current majority wrangle for over a year to produce gargantuan bills filled with complicated and punitive policies, tax increases and special deals, the American people are right to say, no, we don't trust the current Congress to do this right. They have seen how the Congress has worked over the past year and have rightfully said that it's crazy to give the government greater control over our health care. They look at aspects of the legislation before us and say, yes, there are provisions here that we like, but at what cost? They have projected trillion-dollar deficits stretching to the horizon. And we are told that this big, new entitlement will truly restrain costs. Is that credible?

I believe the more sensible approach is a simpler approach. I would favor expanding health savings accounts coupled with catastrophic insurance and paid for with subsidies when necessary. It is a simple arrangement that everyone can understand and would help to restrain costs because everyone would have incentives to spend carefully. It's not all I would do, but it's understandable.

Instead, the current majority is pushing ahead with a breathtakingly expensive bureaucratic and regulatory monstrosity. This is no way to restructure one-sixth of our economy.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Ms. LEE of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, quality, affordable health care should be a fundamental human right, not a privilege for the few, as my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would have it. Today, 47 million Americans are uninsured, including 9 million kids.

Meanwhile, the CEOs of private insurance and drug companies are raking in huge profits. Take the case of WellPoint. They proposed increasing rates by as much as 39 percent in California, even as they made \$4.2 billion in profits last year and paid out million-dollar compensation packages to their top executives. These rate hikes would hit Democratic and Republican districts alike. And the other side would have us do nothing.

We talk about the big banks making a killing off of taxpayers. Well, insurance company executives are literally getting million-dollar compensation packages while our constituents are dying.

Health reform is long overdue. The 31 million people this bill will cover are Democrats, they are Republicans, they are Independents, they are Greens, and they are people with no party affiliation. This should not be a partisan

issue. The costs of inaction are much too risky, they are much too costly, and we must act now.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. BONNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, if health care reform weren't such a serious subject, something that will affect every person in America, then what the Democrats are trying to do would prove to provide enough fodder for comedians like Letterman, Leno and Jon Stewart that their writers wouldn't have to work on new jokes for the next month.

Last week, the Speaker of the House said, "We have to pass the bill so we can find out what's in it." That would be like buying a house before checking it out to see how many bedrooms were in it or what the colors were or whether we could even afford it in the first place. Most Americans don't buy shoes without trying them on, buy a car without test driving it, much less support a takeover of our health care system that will include life-changing decisions that are being kept from you in the dark.

This morning, the Speaker said we may actually vote on the health care bill without voting on it, something that she calls "deem and pass." What a pesky little thing voting is, you know, where those of us who work for you have to actually cast our votes first so you can find out whether you should vote for us in November.

This is an insult and a sham.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. HASTINGS of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, following me will probably be as many as 40 or more of my colleagues on the other side. Many of them will use terms like "ramming," and "the American people." I don't know what part of discussing a matter for the greater portion of the last 14 months that people do not understand.

I also get a little tired of hearing my colleagues talk about socialism. And I would ask the American people if socialism, as you understand it, is so bad when government acts than perhaps it is. Some of my colleagues believe we should eliminate Medicare. Let's eliminate Medicaid. Let's eliminate the Social Security safety net. Let's eliminate the Centers for Disease Control. Let's eliminate the National Institutes of Health. All of these are government-run programs.

In the greatest country in the world, it is morally wrong for millions of our fellow Americans to not have affordable, portable health care. We all should be willing to share in order to help the least of us.